

Message Text

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SUBJECT: 104TH EXBD: AGENDA ITEM 5.5.4 ON MASS MEDIA

REFS: A) PARIS 13486; B) STATE 106909; C) PARIS 13787

1. USDEL SHOULD TAKE POSITION THAT WIDE DIVERSITY OF
STRONGLY HELD CONVICTIONS ON MASS MEDIA DRAFT DECLARA-
TION -- AS DEMONSTRATED BY DG'S REPORT IN EX/28 -- SHOWS
THAT CONSENSUS IMPOSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE AND WITHOUT IT THERE
CAN BE NO DECLARATION ADOPTED. USDEL SHOULD CONTINUE TO
PREPARE FOR WORST CASE -- THAT WE SHALL FINALLY HAVE TO
FIGHT OFF INTRODUCTION OF AN UNACCEPTABLE DRAFT AT THE 20TH
GENERAL CONFERENCE -- BUT SHOULD NEVERTHELESS FULLY
CAPITALIZE ON PSYCHOLOGICAL ADVANTAGE OFFERED BY ISSUANCE
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OF EX/28 AND ADOPT PUBLIC POSITION THAT DRAFT DECLARATION
ON MASS MEDIA THEREBY EFFECTIVELY KILLED OFF FOR NOW. TO
AVOID AROUSING COUNTERPRODUCTIVE RESENTMENTS, HOWEVER,
SUCH EXPRESSIONS SHOULD BE KEPT LOW-KEY AND WOULD BEST BE
STATED FOR EX BD RECORD BY ANOTHER BOARD MEMBER. USDEL
COULD ASSOCIATE ITSELF TO SUCH A STATEMENT AND PRONOUNCE
SOME CONCILIATORY BURIAL REMARKS: THAT THE EXERCISE HAS

QUICKENED OUR SENSES TO THE LEGITIMATE GRIEVANCES OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE COMMUNICATION SECTOR AND FOCUSED URGENT ATTENTION ON THEIR REAL NEEDS IN THE NEW

INFORMATION AGE WHICH IS UPON US. ON THIS THERE IS ASSUREDLY CONSENSUS AND WE SHOULD GET ON WITH THE JOB.

2. SHOULD THERE DEVELOP A DRIVE TO KEEP THE DRAFT DECLARATION ON THE 20TH SESSION AGENDA PER 19C/RES. 4.143, USDEL SHOULD ARGUE THAT THE TIMETABLE SPECIFIED THEREIN HAS ALREADY GONE AWRY -- A VICTIM OF THE DEMONSTRATED INABILITY TO ACHIEVE CONSENSUS -- AND THERE IS INSUFFICIENT TIME TO BEGIN ANEW AND STILL COMPLY WITH THE RESOLUTION'S REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSULTATIONS.

3. USDEL MAY DRAW UPON FOLLOWING IN ITS INTERVENTION:

DG AND STAFF MAY BE COMMENDED FOR THE BROAD CONSULTATIONS CONDUCTED, IN DILIGENT IMPLEMENTATION OF 19C/RES.

4.143, ON THE MASS MEDIA DRAFT DECLARATION, I.E. REQUESTING DG TO PREPARE A FINAL DRAFT DECLARATION "WHICH COULD MEET WITH THE LARGEST POSSIBLE MEASURE OF AGREEMENT."

4. THE WIDE VARIETY OF RESPONSES, ADVOCATING LINES OF ACTION WHICH APPEAR TO BE MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE IN MANY CASES, LEADS INEVITABLY TO THE CONCLUSION THAT CONSENSUS ON THIS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DRAFT INSTRUMENT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE AT THE PRESENT TIME.

5. PURSUIT OF CONSENSUS HAS BEEN THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTIC OF THE TRAJECTORY OF THIS DRAFT DECLARATION SINCE THE 19TH SESSION. IT WAS THE MANIFEST LACK OF CONSENSUS WHICH LED TO THE ADOPTION OF 19C/RES. 4.143, WHICH REQUESTED THE DG TO CONDUCT "FURTHER BROAD CONSULTATIONS" IN PURSUIT OF THE "LARGEST POSSIBLE MEASURE OF AGREEMENT."

6. NOT SURPRISING THAT CONSENSUS HAS ELUDED US ON THIS QUESTION. IN ANY SOCIETY, THE NORMS AND MEANS OF HUMAN SELF-EXPRESSION LIE CLOSE TO THE HEART OF THAT SOCIETY AND FLOW FROM ITS HISTORY, CULTURE AND VALUES, AS WELL AS ITS IDEOLOGY. THE PRECEPTS GOVERNING INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE EXPRESSION ARE THUS EXTREMELY DIVERSE AS DIVERSE AS THE VERY MEMBERSHIP OF UNESCO. THE DIVERSITY AND PLURALISM THAT CHARACTERIZE UNESCO SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO FLOURISH ON A FOUNDATION OF MUTUAL RESPECT AND TOLERANCE. IT WOULD BE ANTITHETICAL TO THIS SPIRIT TO TRY TO IMPOSE A SET OF STANDARDS IN A DOMAIN WHERE

DIVERSITY IS SO EXTENSIVE AND SO VIGOROUSLY ASSERTED.

7. THIS EXERCISE HAS HAD SOME BENEFICIAL EFFECTS, HOWEVER. IT HAS REQUIRED US TO FOCUS UPON THE FACT THAT

ACCESS TO THE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION BY THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD IS VERY UNEVENLY DISTRIBUTED. THE IMBALANCE IS NOT ONLY IN INFORMATION FLOWS, BUT IN THE STAGES OF COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT AS WELL. WE HAVE BECOME CONSCIOUS OF THE FACT THAT THERE ARE MANY DIVERGENT VIEWS ON THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN SOCIETY. THROUGH VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL FORA, THE DIALOGUE AND DEBATE HAVE BECOME MORE ABUNDANT, MORE CANDID AND MORE SOPHISTICATED. DESPITE SOME OCCASIONAL STRIDENT AND EXTREMIST RHETORIC, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IT IS CLEAR THAT MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING HAS INCREASED AND THAT THE PROSPECTS FOR COOPERATION ARE GROWING. INDEED, IT SEEMS INCONTESTABLE THAT A CONSENSUS HAS DEVELOPED ON THE URGENT NECESSITY TO HELP THE PEOPLES OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IMPROVE THEIR CAPACITY TO COMMUNICATE WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS, THEIR OWN GOVERNMENTS AND THE PEOPLES OF OTHER NATIONS. THIS IS THE CONSENSUS WE MUST ACT UPON, IN THE SPIRIT OF THE COUNSEL THE DG PROVIDED US AT THE 19TH SESSION: "TO FOCUS UPON THE THINGS WHICH WE HAVE IN COMMON, WHICH UNITE US, AND WHICH ALLOW US TO MARCH TOGETHER IN PURSUIT OF OBJECTIVES IN HARMONY WITH MANKIND'S ASPIRATIONS."

8. IN ADVANCE OF MAY 5 DISCUSSION OF SUBJECT ITEM, USDEL SHOULD ORCHESTRATE ABOVE POSITION WITH WEO MEMBERS OF EXBD AND, TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, OTHERS AS WELL. VANCE

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